

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 2

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Mitchell**  
**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bradford, Brown, Hall, Holden,**  
**Jones-Sawyer, and Weber)**  
**(Coauthors: Senators Price and Wright)**

January 9, 2013

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 2—Relative to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 2, as introduced, Mitchell. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

This measure would designate that January 21, 2013, be observed as the official memorial of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement in changing public policy in California and in the United States of America. This measure would also recognize the anniversaries of the Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington in connection with the advancement of civil rights.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, This year, 2013, marks the anniversary of two
- 2 important anniversaries in the history of African Americans in the
- 3 United States, the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation
- 4 Proclamation in 1863 and the 50th anniversary of March on
- 5 Washington in 1963; and
- 6 WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation, a wartime
- 7 measure issued by President Abraham Lincoln, freed relatively

1 few slaves, but it fueled the fire of the enslaved to strike for their  
2 freedom, often by enlisting in the Union Army, in an effort to  
3 dismantle the “peculiar institution” of slavery; and

4 WHEREAS, One hundred years after the Emancipation  
5 Proclamation, on August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
6 and others organized hundreds of thousands of blacks and whites,  
7 Jews and gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, in a march to the  
8 Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. where Dr. King made his  
9 famous “I Have a Dream” speech announcing that the days of  
10 segregation in the United States were numbered; and

11 WHEREAS, Monday, January 21, 2013, marks the 27th National  
12 Celebration of the National Holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King,  
13 Jr. and his fight for civil and human rights; and

14 WHEREAS, On Tuesday, January 15, 2013, Dr. Martin Luther  
15 King, Jr. would have been 84 years of age; and

16 WHEREAS, On April 10, 1970, California became the first  
17 state to pass legislation making Dr. King’s birthday a school  
18 holiday and, subsequently, a statewide holiday; and

19 WHEREAS, Representative John Conyers (D-Michigan)  
20 submitted the first legislation for a national Martin Luther King,  
21 Jr. Holiday, which was signed into law by President Ronald Wilson  
22 Reagan, on November 2, 1983; and

23 WHEREAS, January 20, 1986, marked the first observance of  
24 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and

25 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped  
26 change public policy from segregation to integration, resulting in  
27 the repeal of the post-Reconstruction era state laws mandating  
28 racial segregation in the South known as the “Jim Crow Laws,”  
29 thereby leading to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the  
30 Voting Rights Act of 1965, and other antidiscrimination laws aimed  
31 at ending economic, legal, and social segregation in America; and

32 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement helped  
33 change public policy from legal and socially acceptable  
34 discrimination and segregation to an open and accessible policy  
35 of racial integration leading to equal participation and access to  
36 primary and higher education, housing, employment, transportation,  
37 federal, state, and local governmental elections, and other aspects  
38 of public policy relating to human rights; and

39 WHEREAS, These public policy changes at the national level  
40 influenced many changes in California that culminated in the

1 passage of the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the Rumford Fair  
2 Housing Act, in open enrollment and access to higher education  
3 specifically with respect to the California State University and the  
4 University of California, and in employment and labor laws,  
5 transportation policy, election laws, and other aspects of public  
6 policy; and

7 WHEREAS, The unfinished business of Dr. King and the Civil  
8 Rights Movement was and is the plight of the poor, the fight against  
9 war and for worldwide peace, and the struggle for a fair, equitable,  
10 and sensible economic system; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement noted  
12 that a majority of Americans lived below the poverty line, and that  
13 the huge income gaps between rich and poor called for “changes  
14 in the structure of our society”; and

15 WHEREAS, Dr. King, in the last months of his life, began  
16 organizing a Poor People’s Campaign to, among other things,  
17 assemble “a multiracial army of the poor that would descend on  
18 Washington—engaging in nonviolent civil disobedience at the  
19 Capitol, if need be—until Congress enacted a poor people’s bill  
20 of rights”; and

21 WHEREAS, All of the aforementioned concerns and more  
22 continue to be the quest of civil and human rights organizations  
23 in the great State of California, across America, and throughout  
24 the world; and

25 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought to change public  
26 policy from the “self-inflicted wound of segregation to the  
27 pluralistic diverse democracy” we continue to construct today; and

28 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights  
29 Movement serve as a model for principled leadership and  
30 forward-thinking, bipartisan public policy; now, therefore, be it

31 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
32 *thereof concurring*, That Monday, January 21, 2013, be observed  
33 as the official memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth and  
34 his work in the Civil Rights Movement; and be it further

35 *Resolved*, That this day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the  
36 Civil Rights Movement be commemorated for their help in  
37 changing public policy from segregation to integration, for the  
38 betterment of this, the great State of California and these United  
39 States of America; and be it further

1     *Resolved*, That the California Legislature encourages all  
2 Americans to pay tribute to the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther  
3 King, Jr. through participation in community service projects on  
4 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and be it further

5     *Resolved*, That the California Legislature recognizes the inherent  
6 value of community service and volunteerism in the creation of a  
7 civil society and as a means of nonviolent community progress  
8 consistent with the works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and be  
9 it further

10    *Resolved*, That the California Legislature recognizes the benefits  
11 of the collaborative work by many organizations that promote,  
12 facilitate, and carry out needed service projects nationwide; and  
13 be it further

14    *Resolved*, That the California Legislature encourages its  
15 members and colleagues to urge their constituents to participate  
16 in community service projects; and be it further

17    *Resolved*, That the California Legislature acknowledges that,  
18 by serving one's country, one's community, and one's neighbor,  
19 our nation makes progress in civility, equality, and unity consistent  
20 with the values and life's work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and  
21 be it further

22    *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
23 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.